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"He who grown aged in this world of woe,  
In deeds, not years, piercing the depths of life,  
So that no wonder waits him."

BYRON: 'Childe, Harold,' canto iii, stanza 5.

"We live in deeds, not years; in thoughts,  
not breaths." BAILEY: 'Festus. A Country  
Town.'

"Who well lives, long lives; for this age of ours  
Should not be numbered by years, daies, and hours."

DU BARTAS: "Days and Weekes." Fourth Day. Book II.

With the foregoing, however, should be  
ranked Ben Jonson, who, twice at least, has  
given utterance to the same thought, once  
sententiously and once amply. The shorter  
and earlier is in 'Catiline' (1611), Act 3,  
Scene 1:

The vicious count their years, virtuous their acts.

The longer and later is in the 'Ode on the  
Death of Sir H. Morison,' (1629.) Here the  
sentiment is finely expanded:

For what is life, if measured by the space,  
Not by the act?  
Or masked man, if valued by his face,  
Above his fact?  
Here's one outlived his peers,  
And told forth fourscore years:  
He vexed time, and busied the whole state;  
Troubled both foes and friends;  
But ever to no ends:  
What did this stirrer but die late?  
How well at twenty he had fallen or stood!  
For three of his fourscore he did no good.

Go now, and tell our days summed up with fears,  
And make them years;  
Produce thy mass of miseries on the stage,  
To swell thine age:  
Repeat of things a throng,  
To shew thou hast been long,  
Not lived; for life doth her great actions spell  
By what was done and wrought  
In season, and so brought  
To light; her measures are, how well  
Each syllable answered, and was formed how fair;  
These make the lines of life, and that's her air!

It is not growing like a tree  
In bulk, doth make man better be;  
Or standing long an oak, three hundred year,  
To fall a log at last, dry, bald, and sear:  
A lily of a day  
Is fairer far in May,  
Although it fall and die that night;  
It was the plant and flower of light.  
In small proportions we just beauties see;  
And in short measures life may perfect be.

Jonson may perhaps have owed the sug-  
gestion to Du Bartas; but he is more likely to  
have found it somewhere in the ancients.

ALBERT S. COOK.

Yale University.

## OLD GERMANIC LIFE IN THE AN- GLO-SAXON

'WANDERER' AND 'SEAFARER.'\*

EACH of these two poems, which have been  
ascribed to Cynewulf, is interesting from the  
point of view with which this article is con-  
cerned, and, as they both give us pictures of  
a wandering life and show a certain similarity  
of scene and plan, it will be altogether fitting  
to consider them together. The 'Wanderer,'  
with the exception of a half-dozen verses at  
the beginning and as many at the close, is  
heathen to the core and shows almost no trace  
of Christian influence, and the same may be  
said of the first half of the 'Seafarer.' The  
second half of the latter poem is, as has been  
long recognized, a later addition which is im-  
bued with the Christian spirit.

In the 'Wanderer' the Norn, Wyrð, appears  
as a vigorous personality. She is spoken of  
as the far-famed Wyrð, *wyrð seo mære* (W. 100),  
who snatched the earls away from the joys of  
this life. The wearied mind of man cannot  
withstand her (W. 15), and it is her decrees  
that change all the world beneath the heavens  
(W. 107). Even in that portion of the 'Sea-  
farer' which is thoroughly Christian, God  
seems to be identified with Wyrð (S. 115 f.)

*Wyrð biþ swiðre,  
meotud meaktigra þonne ænges monnnes  
gehygd.*

The words (S. 78 ff.)

*his lof sippan lifge mid englum  
awa to ealdre, ecan lifes blæd,  
dream mid dugeþum!*

seem to me to have at their root the old  
heathen conception of Walhalla, where the  
brave man should after death enjoy, together  
with troops of congenial companions, pleas-  
ures similar to, but infinitely greater than  
those afforded by the mead-hall on earth.

\*The text followed is that of Grein-Wülker.

When the fortresses are called *eald enta geweorc* (W. 87), we see how vivid the popular belief still is that there had been a time when giants lived and toiled upon the earth. The superhuman beings had left these time-worn structures as monuments of their industry.

The attitude of the Anglo-Saxon towards the phenomena of nature was not entirely separate from his religious life. That past was not far distant in which he had seen in them the movements of the gods themselves. He still passed a great part of his time in the open air, and was still deeply impressed by the sight of such things as the rising of the sun, the coming on of night, and the changes of the seasons. The beginning of spring is poetically described in the 'Seafarer': The groves bloom; the towns grow fair; the fields become beautiful; the earth is quickened (S. 48-49). The cuckoo, the watchman of summer, sings (S. 53-54). Darkness, which the Teutons hated as much as they loved light, plays a prominent part in their poetry. Night's shadow darkens *nipeð nihtscua* (W. 104, S. 31), and time disappears under night's helmet *nihthelm* (W. 96). The background of each of our poems is a northern region, where the hoary wolf *se hara wulf* (W. 82) slays a man now and then, and where storms rage and the winter is exceedingly severe. More than one winter scene is described. Storms beat these rocks; the driving snow-drift, winter's terror binds the earth, when it cometh wan, night's shadow darkens, sends from the north fierce hailstorms as an annoyance to men

W. 101 ff.

*pas stanhleopu stormas cnyssað ;  
hrið hreosende, hruse bindeð  
wintres woma, þonne won cymeð,  
nipeð nihtscua, norpan onsendeð  
hreo hæglfare hælepum on andan.*

Night's shadow darkened, it snowed from the north, frost bound the land, hail fell upon the earth, the coldest of grains

S. 31 ff.

*Nap nihtscua, norpan sniwe,  
hrim hrusan bond, hæglfeol on eorþan,  
corna caldast.*

A large portion of both poems is devoted to descriptions of the sea and of wanderings on

its bosom. The student of Anglo-Saxon poetry will not be surprised at the large number of synonyms for *sea*. We find *sæ* (W. 4, S. 14, 18), *heanne holm* (W. 82), *hean streamas* (S. 34), *wæg* (S. 19), *fealwe wegas* (W. 46), *flodwegas* (S. 52), *lagu* (S. 47), *holma zelazu* (S. 64), *lagulade* (W. 3), *brimlade* (S. 30), *mereflod* (S. 59), *hwælwæg* (S. 63), *hwæles epel* (S. 60), *wapema gebind* (W. 24, 57), *yða gewearc* (S. 46), *atolypa gewearc* (S. 6), *sealtypa zelac* (S. 35). As names for ships and parts of ships we have *fuzel* (W. 81), *ceol* (S. 5), *nacan stefnan* (S. 7), *hreran mid hondum hrimcealde sæ* (W. 4) is a poetical expression meaning *to ow*. We have several descriptions of the wintry sea. Such epithets are applied to it as *hrimceald* (W. 4), *isceald* (S. 14, 19). The wanderer on the sea is *wintercearig* (W. 24) and hung about with icicles *bihonzen hrimgicelum* (S. 17), while the hail flies in showers (S. 17). The friendless man sees before him the fallow waves, sees sea-fowls bathe and spread their wings, sees rime and snow fall mingled with hail

W. 46 ff.

*gesihð him biforan fealwe wegas,  
bapian brimfluglas, brædan fepra,  
hreosan hrim and snaw hægle gemenged.*

The seafarer says: I heard naught but the sea roaring, the ice-cold flood, and sometimes the swan's song; I made the gannet's cry my joy, and the seal's cry instead of the laughter of men, the singing sea-mew instead of mead-drinking. Storms lashed the rocky cliffs, the icy-feathered ocean-tern answered them; the eagle screamed that very often

S. 18 ff.

*þær ic ne gehyrde butan hlimman sæ,  
iscaldne wæg, hwilum ylfete song :  
dyde ic me to gomene ganetes hleopor  
and huilpan sweg fore hleahtor wera,  
mæw singende fore medodrince.  
Stormas þær stancifru beotan, þær him stearn  
oncwæð  
isigfepera : ful oft þæt earn bigeal  
urizfepa.*

Both poems contain vivid pictures of the dangers and discomforts that beset those who wander on the sea during winter. The seafarer has known in his ship many seats of sorrow. At night he has often had to endure

lonely watchings at the vessel's prow, when it was in danger of being dashed to pieces against the cliffs. The cold has fettered the limbs of the sea-weary one, and hunger has almost overcome him (S. 5-12). But notwithstanding the discouraging words with which the old sailor paints these perils and woes, the young man feels that intense longing for the sea which is so deeply rooted in the Germanic nature. His soul is constantly impelling him to seek foreign shores (S. 36-38). There are no ties strong enough to bind a hero to the life on land; he is mad with love of the sea and always yearning for it (S. 39-43). The music of the harp, the receiving of rings, the love of woman—all this and everything else he forgets in thinking of the sea (S. 44-47). While the young sailor is ashore, his mind leaves his body in order to wander about over the ocean, and then returning forces the body to accompany it on a like journey (S. 58-66). In short, no language could be stronger than that in which this characteristic passion is described.

There was something that the Anglo-Saxon dreaded far more than the hardships of the wintry ocean. It was the separation from home and loved ones. No punishment could have seemed worse to him. Both the wanderer and the seafarer speak of the dark days when they were exiles, deprived of home *ēðle bideled* (W. 20), far from free kinsmen *freomægum feor* (W. 21), bereft of his dear relatives *winemægum bidroren* (S. 16). No protecting kinsman *hleomæg* (S. 25) was there to comfort the seafarer's poor soul, and the wanderer too was friendless *freondleas* (W. 28). In such lonely moments the remembrance of one's kinsmen flits across one's mind, and they are greeted with joy, just as if they were actually present; but one soon finds that one is embracing but the shadow of the past (W. 51-55).

The feeling of the vassal towards his lord is of the tenderest kind. Most of the designations of the lord are very expressive, as *goldwine* (W. 22, 35), *goldgitefa* (S. 83), *sinces brytta* (W. 25), *maþpumgifa* (W. 92), *winedryhten* (W. 37), and the frequent allusions to *wunden gold* (W. 32), *sincpege* (W. 34), *hringpege* (S. 44), *giefstol* (W. 44), attest his liberality.

After the veil of the earth had wrapped his gold-friend, the wanderer sought in sorrow the hall of a dispenser of treasure who in the mead-hall might be acquainted with love, or console the friendless one, pleasure him with joys (W. 22-29). He remembers the hall, the heroes, and the treasure-taking, how in his youth his gold-friend accustomed him to entertainment (W. 34-36). In case such a man must long forego the wise redes of his dear lord, he seems to himself, when sorrow and sleep together overcome him, to embrace and kiss his lord, and lay his hands and head on the latter's knees, as in the days of yore when he stood before the gift-seat. But his grief is more poignant than ever when he awakes and finds that it was only a dream (W. 37-50).

The banqueting-hall *sele* (W. 25, 34), *medoheall* (W. 27), *winsæl* (W. 78), so dear to the Germanic heart, is often mentioned. Connected with this life in the mead-hall are the *bune* (W. 94), *symbia gesetu* (W. 93), *medodrinc* (S. 22), *burgwara breacmas* (W. 86). The mention of the harp *hearpe* (S. 44), which was passed round the circle to him whose turn it was to sing, reminds us of Bede's story of Cædmon. The joy of this life of conviviality is expressed by *dream* (W. 79, S. 86), *seledreamas* (W. 93).

The wall of a certain dismantled fortress is described as wondrously high and spotted with carven snakes *wyrmlicum fah* (W. 98).

In the 'Seafarer' there is an allusion to the old custom of burning dead bodies upon the funeral pile (S. 114).

Both of the poems that now claim our attention are bathed in the sad light of fatalism. It is impossible for man to withstand the Wyrð (W. 15, 107, S. 115-116) during this dark life *þis deorce lif* (W. 89). Everything comes into being but to perish. "Das ist das Loos des Schönen auf der Erde." The glory of liege lords and vassals vanishes, and their proud fortresses lie in ruins. Life is sad at best, but, nevertheless, one must strive to live like a man. One must keep one's sorrow locked within the breast, and let moderation and fidelity be the guiding star of one's existence. Then one will be spoken well of after

death by the comrades who survive and by those who come after them—a thing that the Teuton most eagerly desired.

There is scarcely an allusion to war-life in the 'Seafarer.' *duġuð* occurs twice (S. 80, 86), and *ecġhete* (S. 70) sword-hate is a word used to mean war—one of the three ways in which death comes to man. Such expressions as *wiġ* (W. 80), *wiġa* (W. 67), *byrnmwiġa* (W. 94), *modġe maġuþeġnas* (W. 62), *duġuð* (W. 79, 97), *collenferð* (W. 71), *ġielþ* (W. 69), tend to give the 'Wanderer' a more warlike coloring. The exile is mindful of cruel slaughters, of the downfall of dear kinsmen *wraþra wælslehta*, *winemæġa hryre* (W. 7). All of the brave troop fell heroically before the rampart *duġuð eal ġecronġ wolnc bi wealle* (W. 79-80). The strength of ashen spears snatched away the earls, weapons greedy of slaughter, the far-armed Wyrd

W. 99 f.

*eorlas fornoman asca þrype,  
wæpen wælġifru, wyrd seo mære.*

C. C. FERRELL.

University of Mississippi.

### THE VIVACITIES OF MR. GOSSE.

THERE is a certain emancipated school of artists who, casting off the yoke of ancient tradition, have risen to a higher conception of the object and aims of art. The supreme duty of the artist is not, we are told, to represent things as they are or as they would be, but to convey to the spectator the impression they produce on him who beheld or conceived them. Object that the lady's hair cannot be that impossible purple, or that this outline or attitude is not reconcilable with human anatomy, and the answer is that the artist is not a photographer, and his business is not to record facts, but his own impressions. A view which lifts plastic art to that transcendent sphere where music has hitherto dwelt alone.

While some of our literary critics of late years have carried into their art the methods of the exacter sciences, and by their formulæ can precipitate Dekker or Rowley from the most complex solution, or trace the curve of Massinger through five intricate acts,

others, impatient of statistical criticism, have sought refuge in the enchanted castle of the impressionists. Among these Mr. Gosse, who is nothing if not entertaining, has given the world at various times his impressions of a considerable number of writers, especially of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, in a tone of airy lightness and joyous irresponsibility that reminds one of an emancipated Ariel sipping the blossoms that hang on the bough.

Mr. Gosse's last work is devoted to his impressions of the Jacobean poets. But at the very outset, perhaps as a concession to our Philistinism, he makes what we venture to think an unfortunate mistake—he attempts to define. Had he been content with telling us whom he classed as Jacobean poets and whom as Elizabethan, he would have kept on safe ground; but he somewhat rashly proceeds to lay down criteria by which we may draw the distinction ourselves. Of course the ordinary reader is likely to share the ordinary view, that the Jacobean poet is one who flourished, or tried to flourish, in the reign of King James; but Mr. Gosse hastens to guard us against this error. He does not deny that there were Jacobeans in James's time; but that is not the point at all. It is not a question of date but characteristics. There are certain qualities of the writing that make a writer an Elizabethan or Jacobean, whatever year he wrote in; and these qualities he proceeds to formulate. In the first place the Jacobeans had lost "the clear morning note, the sincerity, the coolness and sober sweetness" of their predecessors. We could use this test more satisfactorily if we were but sure what these are; and our perplexity is increased when the critic comes to apply his own criteria. For example, in Fletcher's 'Faithful Shepherdess,' beginning—

"See the day begins to break,  
And the light shoots like a streak  
Of subtle fire; the wind blows cold,  
And the morning doth unfold"—

one would think if anywhere, "the clear morning note" was heard; but it appears we are wrong, for Fletcher is cited as "characteristically" Jacobean. The "decline of lyrical gift" is another criterion, and he hastens to